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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, July 11, 2023

## DART Commission Names Amanda Wanke CEO

Former DART Deputy CEO and COO selected following nationwide search

**Des Moines, IA** – The DART Board of Commissioners announced today that Amanda Wanke is their choice to lead the Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) as Chief Executive Officer. Well known to DART and the Greater Des Moines community, Wanke worked at DART for seven years in various leadership roles, including Chief External Affairs Officer and Deputy CEO and Chief Operations Officer.

“It is a pleasure to welcome Amanda back to DART as CEO,” said DART Commission Vice Chair and Chair of the CEO Search Committee Josh Mandelbaum. “We looked for a candidate that would further DART’s commitment to improve quality of life and drive economic development in central Iowa. Amanda has the leadership skills, relationships and industry experience we need to navigate the challenges ahead and elevate the role of transit in Greater Des Moines.”

Wanke came to DART in 2015 as the Chief External Affairs Officer with a valuable cross section of experiences in government relations, stakeholder engagement, public relations, media relations, and team leadership. In May 2020, the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Amanda was named Deputy CEO and Chief Operations Officer, leading 200 employees in DART’s transportation, maintenance, and customer service departments. She left last October to work for New Flyer and MCI, a leading bus and coach manufacturer.

“I am honored to have the opportunity to again work with the DART Commission, member communities, staff and riders,” said Wanke. “I am passionate about transit and the positive impact it has on people and communities. Now more than ever it’s important to work collaboratively to develop a sustainable vision for transit that will improve quality of life for central Iowa residents and deliver a return on investment for taxpayers.”



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DART's CEO position became open earlier this year after Elizabeth Presutti, who led DART for 11 years, relocated to Charlotte, North Carolina for her husband's job. The DART Commission hired Maryland-based executive search firm Krauthmer & Associates (K&A Partners) to conduct a nationwide search for DART's next CEO. K&A collected input from the DART Board of Commissioners, local elected officials, City Managers, business and community leaders and DART's leadership team to determine what DART needed in its next CEO.

"Amanda is a proven leader known for her collaborative style, transparent communication and optimistic, yet realistic approach to managing limited resources in a community where the need for transportation services continues to grow," said DART Commission Chair and West Des Moines Mayor Russ Trimble. "Transit agencies across the country are facing difficult decisions about funding and service levels, and our region is no different. I believe Amanda is the right leader at the right time to lead DART through the challenges ahead and to ensure central Iowans continue to benefit from seamless, affordable mobility options for years to come."

During her 7-year tenure at DART, Amanda ensured essential transportation services continued throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, launched several new and innovative services—including Flex Connect and DART On Demand, led the deployment of the agency's first electric buses, successfully negotiated union contracts, improved customer satisfaction and non-rider awareness, increased advertising revenue and added new partnerships to increase transit access and revenue.

Amanda's prior professional experience includes leading communications, government relations, and team leadership in several industries. Wanke attended Bethel University where she received her BA in Political Science and MA in Organizational Leadership.

Amanda and her husband Randy have two teenage children and live in West Des Moines.

The Des Moines Area Regional Transit Authority (DART) is Iowa's largest, and only, regional transit agency, providing service in and around Polk County. DART operates a family of transportation services, providing nearly 4.5 million annual rides that connect thousands of people every day to jobs, school, healthcare and other essential destinations. Twelve member governments make up DART's service area, where the agency carries out its mission to enrich lives, connect communities and expand opportunities for central Iowans. For more information about DART services, schedules, route changes, or directions to the nearest DART stop, visit the website at [ridedart.com](http://ridedart.com), download the free MyDART app or call 515-283-8100.

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